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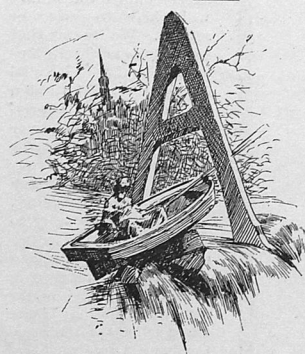
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WITH MODERATE MEANS.

BY
ELLA RODMAN CHURCH,

AUTHOR OF
"How to Furnish a Home," etc., etc.



It will not do to meddle with the kitchen, auntie, what can we take out of the dining-room?"

"Take up the fine-striped rug from the floor, which has cost \$21, and substitute drugget, or felt carpet, at \$12 for a

piece sufficiently large to cover the floor within a yard of the wood-work. The first covering is, of course, richer; but the drugget can be very pretty, and it can be put down in the same way with rings fastened to nails in the floor, that it may easily be taken up and shaken."

"That will not make much difference, I should think, in the looks of the room; what is the next sacrifice?"

"The chimney-piece, costing \$20.00, which had better go toward the parlor mantel. We will put in its place a covering of maroon Canton flannel, and edge the back piece with moderate-sized gilt-headed nails. The lambrequin may be formed entirely of deep chenille fringe to match, edged with gold. This will not look at all badly; and you can substitute, in place of the plain back, if you prefer it, a curtain of the same depth bordered with gold, and run on a narrow brass pole with rings. It can be made more ornamental by placing a small mirror in the centre, framed merely in *passee-partout*, as the frame will not be seen, and looping the curtain back on either side to show it. The whole thing should not cost over \$3.00."

"It would be much better, to economize in this way in the dining-room, so long as we cannot have what we want *everywhere*; and it is really a very pretty arrangement. What else can be dispensed with, I wonder?"

"The pretty *dressoir* at \$17.00. You can have two long, wide shelves made by the carpenter and covered, like the mantel, with Canton flannel; but in place of the fringe, I would edge them with wide, coarse lace, which can be bought for very little a yard. You will find these shelves quite ornamental, as well as convenient, and a very cheap substitute for a side-board. At a rough guess, I should say that \$3.25 would cover the outside cost."

"That is delightful! But we can scarcely take anything else from the dining-room?"

"Yes, I think I shall take the *lounge*,—which will give us \$15.00 more. But, having taken the substitute for a side-board, there should be a small table with a marble top to accommodate the ice-pitcher; and you can probably get one for \$2.50. It will scarcely do to meddle further with this apartment, from which we shall retire with a gain of \$54.75; and except for the absence of the lounge, the room does not look much the worse for it. When we have finished our work of spoliation, we may see fit to restore this very useful piece of furniture."

"I really think we *must*, in the end, as the dining-room is to be a sitting-room as well; though my charming up-stairs room can be made to answer that purpose. We have certainly done well to rescue that \$54 for the parlor, and now I can have my cabinet."

"The work is still to go on, of taking to pieces and putting together again; and now, if you have no objection, we will go up-stairs. First, the Kensington rugs are to be discarded; they are much too extravagant for such stern economists."

"That is quite a heart-break, for I am fond of the rugs; and the alternative, I suppose, is straw matting?"

"Just that. Plain white for the blue room will be very fresh and cool-looking; and, for fear of its being too cool, you can buy two yards and a half of pretty ingrain carpet, in reduced stock, at sixty cents a yard. The color is a good blue, with some gray and a little dull red mingled. Cut this piece in two, fringe the ends by raveling them out, and you have a couple of very respectable rugs for bureau and bedside, at a cost of \$1.50. The difference between the South Kensington rug

and the straw matting will be about \$13.50; and the cost of the carpet taken from this leaves us \$12.00 to add to our store. I do not wish to disturb the serenity of this pretty room any further,—not having the heart even to whisk off the mantel-cover and substitute something plainer, although it might be a saving of \$2.00, or thereabouts."

"What is the mantel-cover, auntie? I do not remember your saying anything about it before?"

"The idea of your not being acquainted with what is so palpable to my own inner vision! Well, the mantel-cover was of blue sateen, with a lambrequin of the creamy macramé twine crocheted so that the open spaces are perpendicular instead of horizontal; and blue satin ribbon is run into these spaces and fastened at the top, extending to the end of the fringe."

"Very pretty, indeed; but just a little extravagant, I think, considering all the materials and my labor. Why not buy two yards of the Madras curtain goods, or even two and a half, if necessary—as this will be the only expense except a yard and an eighth of blue cambric to line the shelf-cover—and cutting off the border on both sides, at a sufficient depth, plait it for a lambrequin? This will save my time, and some money besides."

"A happy inspiration; and counting the ribbon, twine, sateen, etc., I think we shall gain at least forty cents in money,—not counting your time."

"That is ridiculous!—especially as the first arrangement is prettier and I am willing to do the work, which is not very much, after all. But I supposed it would cost completed at least \$3.00, if not more."

"So did I until the items were actually computed. But ribbons are very cheap now; and for fifteen or sixteen cents a yard, the necessary width of two and a quarter inches can easily be obtained. Three hanks of twine, at twenty-five cents a hank, will make the lambrequin; and a plain, deep-blue sateen is to be had at twenty-five cents a yard. I am glad that my mantel-cover can be left, although the other would be pretty; and I am also glad that the blue room is not to be stripped any more."

"I am groaning, though, over my red one; I cannot tell what dreadful things you are contemplating there."

"The pretty gray and red floor covering must go, of course; and in its place we will have red and white straw matting, at a gain of about \$18.25."

"The gain is very satisfactory; but must I not spend some of it in carpet for rugs?"

"Not just yet; you can easily knit a couple of those moss-rugs, at your leisure, from your store of wools, with very little outlay. And we need not take anything more from the room; in spite of the glories of lace-covered mantel, lounge, and table. The dressing-room remains intact."

"And the third story?"

"I would add to that, rather than subtract. Our raid, at this point, yields you the neat little sum of \$84.00; and if you choose to continue it to the parlor carpet, you can get a beautiful body Brussels, in soft olive and citrine hues, for \$1.25 a yard. The bordering, too, is very pretty; and made up, like the other, as a rug, it will cost only about \$53.00. This gives you a gain of \$22.00 on the carpet alone."

"And that added to \$84.00, makes \$106.00! I will have that ebony mantel cabinet, which you liked so much, at \$40.00, for the first thing; and the flash and glimmer of the plate-glass will set off the room beautifully. My prettiest bits of color decoration shall go there: a vase of Mandarin yellow, two smaller ones of turquoise-blue, those gilded and embossed flagons, and my two or three choice pieces of china. The mirrors will give back their doubled reflections,—doubled both in quantity and in beauty."

"It will certainly be a very ornamental addition to the parlor, and almost reconcile me to the loss of my pet carpet. What next?"

"Then I will discard two of those light, ebonized chairs, at \$5.50 each, and get in their place two more substantial ones of peculiar style, a species of 'advanced' camp-chair, which I have seen at H—'s for \$10.00, uncovered. I can have some of the striped velours put on—for there will be enough left from the width of the piece used for the table-scarf; and the \$60.00 spent in this way will make a great improvement in the room. Besides, the discarded mantel-cover was to cost \$8.50; so that we have still \$64.50. I will put the dining-room lounge back, and that leaves \$49.50 yet. One can do considerable with that, when there are no large pieces of furniture to be bought; and I think we will have a handsome ebonized music-rack, that I saw lately, for \$20.00. It is like a tall, narrow cabinet, with its upper shelves for *bric-a-brac*, and its beautifully polished surface; and it will fit nicely into that corner by the piano. A basket of flowers, or ferns when I have no flowers, will have a charming effect on that upper shelf."

"It will be exceedingly pretty, and I am quite in love with the reconstructed parlor. But you still have \$29.50 burning in your pocket."

"It will not burn long, auntie; there are so many desirable things that I scarcely know what to take and what to go without. I want two small round tables with fancy covers,—the latter I will make myself, according to my own devices—and these will cost about \$3.00 each. One can scarcely have too many small tables, you know. Then I must have that pair of small water-color landscapes, *Summer and Winter*,—costing only \$5.00 for the two, unframed. Blank will frame them in gilt beading for \$1.50 a piece; and I will get two of those daintily-embroidered Japanese panels, on pale-blue silk with gold borders, which N— is selling for \$10.00 a pair."

"Just \$5.50 left now,—what about that?"

"It is a pity not to spend it, isn't it? Yet I think I will lay it aside toward a book-case which I hope to accomplish before long. As it is, I have only a set of those cheap little shelves to hang in the dining-room, and another for my own room. Covered and fringed, they will do very nicely for the present, and they are wonderfully convenient."

BITS ABOUT TOWN.

Marble is prominent now in every decorative scheme, and the result has been the introduction of a number of new marbles. Some of the most beautiful of these come from our own country, which is developing great self-sufficiency in the way of materials. One of the newest is a southern marble, pinkish-yellow veined, mingling with warm gray. The tint is very happy with the yellow reds so frequently chosen as a dominating color. The marble is difficult to work, but amply repays the trouble. There is a Tennessee marble which resembles verd antique, and a lake marble that is very much like Verona marble. In deeper, richer tints we have nothing that compares with the gorgeous Numidian marble. The Sienna and Ecaillon marble are lavishly used in conservatories, and Verona marble is not infrequent. One of the later imported marbles is a vivid green, so vivid in fact that it is difficult to harmonize it in decoration. The best use I have seen of it is in wreaths in a mosaic mantel-piece, and here it was mingled with pink marble representing buds. The effect was charming. Its next best use is in narrow borders. In large masses it is too loud a note.

Notwithstanding marble mantels have been for some time in ill favor, in the handsomest houses recently built they are found. The Villard house has magnificent mantels of both Sienna and Verona marbles. In a more recent house the mantel in the hall is of Verona marble, the pilasters being gigantic fern leaves, cut, of course, only as to their more prominent forms. The dining-room mantel is of verd antique and copies the projecting hooded mantel of some old French chateau. The drawing-room mantel is of huge slabs of Numidian marble with a deep niche cut in to serve instead of a mantel-shelf. Still another mantel of Tennessee marble is conspicuous for that peculiar joint which Viollet le Duc introduced into his reconstruction of the chateau of Pierrefonds.

Two mantels are mosaics, one in Sienna marble with ornament in color, the other of some black stone into which is set circles of the green marble alluded to above.

A much more infrequent use of marble was recently seen in a vestibule. The frieze certainly two feet and a half deep was of Numidian marble with its deep splashes of red and yellow. The ceiling was of Sienna marble, one vast block, held up by brass moldings. In another house the wainscoting is of slabs of Verona marble. This is fashioned into panels by borders of Sienna marble, enclosing a strip of the vivid green marble. In still another house the conservatory is lined with Ecaillon marble with borders of Sienna. In another conservatory the water flows from a circular-topped panel with a niche of Numidian marble.

The increased use of brass is also conspicuous. Above is an allusion to the part it plays in holding up the marble-ceiled vestibule. In another instance instead of joining two upright marble slabs meeting in a corner in the usual way by a marble joint, they are bound in two brass strips riveted together. A notable use of brass is in a vast hall in which the corners of the doors have broad brass pieces made slightly ornamental in their lines, and the oak pillars have capitals of brass leafage. An open ornament of brass is also seen on all the spandrels of the staircase. But the most conspicuous use is in perforated panels of brass, that take the place of the balustrade from the landing in the descent of the stairs, into the center of the hall. The brass in each case has some beauty in itself, and in the general scheme lights up the somberness of the dark oak.